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## SPRING-TIME IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

BY THOMAS MILLER.

Spring comes peeping round the corners of the crowded streets and breathless alleys of busy London—twenty times a day do those industrious costermongers, whose stock changes as the seasons change, pass my door, exclaiming, 'All a-growing, all a-blowing!' And the goodwives who have a little back-yard, in which the sunshine sometimes finds itself a prisoner, hurry out and buy wallflowers, daisies, hollyhocks, sweet-williams, &c. &c. at a penny a root; and these they plant in the two narrow square yards beyond the water-butt, where they dwindle away in a week or two, if they are not broken down before morning by the cats. A poor man's London garden measures about six paces; and besides the outhouse at the end, contains a dust-bin, water-butt, coal-shed, two posts that uphold the clothes-line, a little square cinder space in the centre, eight feet by six—the children's playground—and his flower-beds on each side the low, damp, sunless wall. His waving trees are stacks of chimneys, the pots of which are occasionally gilded by the sunlight. In some primitive neighbourhoods, where sewer was never yet sunk, a deep sluggish ditch yawns and stigmatises, and there a stunted alder—a kind of living death—does, in its slow decay, now and then manage to make a sign, and lift up its few green leaves, amid which 'smuts and blacks nestle in place of birds.' Not that these London gardens are wholly without their choristers, for there are plenty of sparrows, whose notes seem to have been copied from the sounds made by the knife-grinders in the streets; and sometimes these dirty fellows come out from under the smoky eaves, and hop about like a parcel of little sweeps. You never see them 'preen' themselves, like your decent country sparrows; for they seem to know that it would be but 'labour in vain;' so they get case-hardened as soon as they can, and look as glossy as beetles. The banks beside these ditches, instead of being white over with daisies, are strewn with broken crockery, while an old saucepan-handle occasionally shoots out, and here and there a rag flutters from the stunted alders, and throws a cooling shadow upon the fragments of broken bottles below. Part of an old hamper, yellow with rain and rot, at the foot of which a piece of old green baize has been thrown, may, if the imagination is vivid enough, be magnified into a root of primroses. Violets, too, on a washing-day, where the women use plenty of stone-blue, may, by the same imaginative power, be seen to wave on these banks when they empty their washing-tubs. The Zephyrs, who 'fan their odoriferous wings' in these gardens, come in the shape of door-mats and carpets, and raise such cloudy perfumes as make a man sneeze again, while the silver showers rouse every Sabrina that sits

under the 'cool translucent' sewers. These London gardens are also rich in earwigs—great, nimble, long-bodied things, which, if you chance to cut them in two with the spade, make nothing at all of it, but scamper off like an engine without the train, leaving that black and cumbrous body, the carriage, behind. They are accompanied by a genteel sort of worm, with a superabundance of legs. In the bulbs which you have left all winter in the ground, hundreds of little innocent grubs congregate, that come forth in due time, eat up every green leaf, and then attack the stalks. In vain do you apply soap-suds and tobacco smoke; their lives hang not by a slender thread; they were never delicately nursed, but born to endure every hardship. There are thousands of such gardens as these in and around London, and hundreds of pounds are expended in the purchase of flowers in spring-time to decorate these little sunless patches of earth. As for sowing seed, you might as well expect to see a crop of gravel shoot up: a kidney-bean, by the end of a week, is occupied by a thriving family of grubs.

Spring in London is borne through our streets in barrows, or sometimes carried in triumph in a basket on the heads of her votaries; besides flowers, she comes crowned with radishes and young onions; or, like a gleaner in autumn, bears a sheaf of rhubarb on her brow. Her hair is entwined with the sprouts of broccoli, while in her hand she carries a cream-coloured cauliflower. Sometimes you see her crammed into a little sieve, where she sits looking out of the windows in the shape of a salad. There is no room for her to flaunt in all her gay attire in this money-growing city. Her very violets, as if even the perfume occupied too much space, are rolled up in leaves and paper, and sold in a dying state; for London is the great cemetery of flowers—the grave in which all the 'beautiful daughters of the earth and sun' are buried. They cannot live amid its high-piled walls.

'High up the vapours fold and swim,  
Above them floats the twilight dim,  
The place they knew forgetteth "them,"'

How different is spring-time in the sweet, green, open country, where the sunshine seems to sleep like a wide unbounded ocean, stretching to the edge of the very heaven from which the golden radiance descends! Here the silver-footed showers of April leap and chase each other from leaf to leaf; and you might fancy that every rounded drop went dancing on until it became weary, then settled down into the bells of the flowers, or slept amid the opening buds that come forth in their tenderest array of green. You hear the lark singing somewhere amid the dissolving snow of the clouds, but cannot tell whether it is hidden among the blue that hangs below the floor of heaven, or amid the feathery silver that streams out like the wings of a mighty angel. Through

the vernal green of the grass you see the young daisies dawn, as if a new firmament was rising out of the earth, studded with another milky-way of unnumbered stars. The bleating of the young lambs falls upon the ear with a strange, dreamy sound, and you seem wandering through a newly-made world—a fresh formation, that has risen above the wreck and ruin of winter, and strewn the brow of its black, naked, and volcano-like front with flowers. You hear the babbling of childish voices in the winding lanes, and by the woodside; and there is a cheerful creaking of busy wheels on the brown and dusty highway, which fills the landscape with sounds of life, where before the snow lay like a winding-sheet over the muffled lips of the dead. The streams have broken asunder their icy fetters, and like liberated slaves, with the jingling fragments dangling about them, go dancing and singing down the steep hill-sides, and through the valleys, as if their only delight was in the motion that accompanied the sounds they made. The bees, like schoolboys broken loose, come buzzing out of the hives, and murmuring to each other as they hasten along, ransack every hidden nook in search of flowers, and wage war against the velvet buds; while those dusky and noisy foragers, the rooks, either sally out to ravage the wide neighbourhood, or stay at home, brawling and fighting, among the branches of their old 'ancestral trees.' The bark-peelers are busy stripping and felling in the adjacent forest, and you inhale the rich aroma as you wander along, and sigh when you think of the baked atmosphere which you are doomed to breathe in the burning summer of the city. If you ramble beside the clear river, there, in the willow holt, you see the busy osier-peelers at work, hear the rods whistling through the brake, and behold the tall taper wands spread out in the breeze and sunshine to dry. Field and farm, forest and river, hill and valley, are all alive, and throbbing beneath the stirring impulse of spring.

As the season advances, the day is cheered by the glad shouting of the cuckoo, and the silence of night awakened by the song of the nightingale; for as the voice of spring deepens, it is heard everywhere; and a hundred different choristers come from distant lands to swell the great anthem which is poured forth in our wild greenwoods.

Spring-time is the youthful season of the year; it passes its babyhood in the lap of winter, wrapped in its swaddling-clothes of snow; summer is the beauty of its full manhood; and autumn, with its yellow and fallen leaves, the old year in its age and decay. We have not that love for the flowers of autumn which we extend to those of spring, beautiful as many of them are; for we know that when they are withered and dead, nature must sink into a long sleep before others will grow up to replace them. With spring it is different: the violet and the primrose are quickly followed by the rose and the lily; and when the hawthorn has shed its pearl-tinted blossoms, the sweet woodbine appears with her crimson-streaked cheek. Yet if we love the flowers of spring more, we see them pass away with less regret than we do those of autumn. So with the loves and friendships formed in our youthful days; the broken and parting pangs seem more severely felt at the time, but they leave not the lingering regrets which make the heart empty and desolate in its old age. In the spring of our lives we shoot up amid sunshine and beauty, but bear no fruit; even that which hangs upon the summer of our manhood is green and crude, and scarcely worthy of being garnered until mellowed by the mists of autumn.

When shed and treasured, the season is again in its infancy; for spring leaps not up from the ashes of the dying year, but sleeps throughout the long night in the womb of winter. The child cannot begin with the knowledge we leave behind us when we enter the mysterious gates of the grave. There is a closer affinity between the out-of-door world of nature and ourselves than may at a first glance appear. The bud, the leaf, the flower, and the fruit, exhibit every stage of progression from infancy, youth, and manhood, to old age. The perfection of all intellectual growth is but a superior seed dropped into fruitful soil. The spirit of Shakspeare lives not when grafted on a dull human stock—the rose cannot take root in a heap of cinders and ashes—the mountain-heath withers and dies in the swampy soil of the reedy marsh.

There was a time when, to our own minds, spring brought but few associations, saving such as were connected with the lengthening of the days, the return of the singing-birds, and the coming again of the flowers. Even now, we can ramble throughout the whole livelong day, and divest our mind of all graver memories, contented to watch the shifting colours that fade over the landscape, and to burrow about the banks and hedgerows. But amid those grave and sable hours which slowly close the curtains of the midnight, almost every distinct object assumes a shape, and has a meaning; it becomes a part of one great whole, proving that

'The whole round earth is every way  
Bound with gold chains about the feet of God.'

The sunshine of spring comes in light and gladness, and throws open hundreds of narrow courts and suffocating alleys in London; and in the warm mild evenings, you see the inhabitants congregated on the broad pavements of the open streets, or seated upon the kerbstones, or the steps around the mouths of those inhabited charnel-houses. The little, ill-clad, half-fed, dirty children are no longer driven to their pallets of straw or shavings at so early an hour as they were in winter. They now run riot in the streets, chasing each other like swallows, forgetting even for the time the pangs of hunger in the midst of their momentary happiness. The blessed sunshine, that God scatters like gold from heaven upon the rich and poor, even in these places, produces enjoyment not the less pure because unpurchased by the worldly man's standard of wealth. Many of these children are shoeless. After every romp, they have to stop to replace the little dirty frocks that have slipped off their thin spare shoulders: for every pull, and drag, and rent, they will probably, when they arrive at home, receive a blow; this they appear perfectly conscious of from the exclamations occasionally uttered; yet they 'bate not a jot of heart nor hope,' but run after each other with merry whoop and loud halloo, until summoned in by the shrill voices of their mothers. Many of them, during the daytime, had wandered from door to door, perfect in the very trick of the beggar's suffering look and canting whine, bearing a box of lucifers or a row of pins, under cover of which they escaped the vigilance of the police. It would be difficult to recognise these juvenile impostors amongst that merry group, were we not accustomed to meet them in 'their daily walks and ancient neighbourhoods.'

The village poor, amid all their poverty, can see the hand of spring at work as she hangs the tender green upon the branches, and scatters flowers of every hue over upland and valley. Unpoisoned by the malaria that rises from sink and sewer, the unadulterated air of heaven blows sweetly through the open doors of their thatched cottages, and there the morning sunshine comes streaming in, bright and beautiful as when it first issued from the golden chambers of the east. Instead of the waving of ill-washed garments, which send up an unhealthy smoke as they hang to dry in the city courts, the long leaves are talking to them all day long; and in place of the bawling of the costermongers, who from morning until night are ever breaking the peace of the

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streets, their ears are greeted with the mellow pipings of the golden-billed blackbird, the music that gushes forth from the speckled throat of the throistle, or descends like a shower of melody from the clouds, where the twinkling wings of the skylark beat. The very child sent out to tend cattle in the long wandering lanes—who appeases his hunger by a hunch of brown bread, and quenches his thirst at the wayside brook—finds a hundred objects to amuse him in his solitude, and shuns all those numberless vices which lie in wait at every corner of our thickly-populated cities.

Unfettered, he can roam abroad,  
And as he chooses pass the hours;  
Can linger idly by the road,  
Or loiter 'mid the wayside flowers:  
For what cares he about the morrow?—  
Too young to sigh, too old to fear;  
He has no time to think of sorrow—  
He finds the daisies everywhere;  
And still sings through each green retreat,  
And plucks the flowers around his feet.

#### ERMAN'S TRAVELS.

IN 1827, Professor Hansteen, in pursuance of his researches in terrestrial magnetism, set out upon an expedition into the interior of Siberia, the expense of which was defrayed by the Norwegian government. The request of Mr Erman, already known in the scientific world, to be allowed a share in the undertaking, was complied with; and the results of his observations, both moral and philosophical, are now laid before the English reader by Mr Cooley.\* Mr Erman's reputation is a sufficient guarantee for the value of the book. In 1844, he received one of the Royal Geographical Society's medals; the president, Sir R. I. Murchison, declaring, while he pronounced the adjudication, that with the exception of Humboldt himself, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a man more deserving of the honour. Supported by this authority, Mr Cooley, in the preface, very naturally launches out into the praise of his author, not only as a scientific traveller, but as a correct observer of manners, and appreciator of national character. To this, however, we have some demur to make, though not as regards Mr Erman's talents, but solely on the score of the inadequacy of his opportunities. In so rapid a journey, it was impossible for him to do more than skim the surface; and it was equally impossible for him to avoid the misapprehensions to which even the most talented traveller is liable in hastily traversing a foreign country. It is as safe as it is easy to praise where we are ignorant; but since 1827, much light has been thrown upon at least European Russia; and in the portion of the work referring to this region, we cannot say that we are struck by any great superiority on the part of our author over the common run of hasty travellers.

But some allowance must be made for the mere lapse of time; for the 'permanent form of civilisation' has no more permanence in Russia than elsewhere. Mr Erman's journey from St Petersburg to Moscow lay through a savage country, almost wholly destitute of inns or other conveniences for travellers; while only eight or nine years later, we ourselves rolled over the same tract in a diligence more comfortable than any we ever met with in France, dining at handsome restaurants by the roadside *à la carte*, and having our choice of French and German wines at various prices. All this was an agreeable surprise, as we had been forewarned by Dr Clarke that it would be madness to expect even clean straw for a bed. Had we taken this traveller's advice, we should have provided ourselves with a pewter teapot, a kettle, a saucepan, tea, sugar, bread, and meat; and on depending from the diligence to dine, we should

have astonished the natives by walking into their Parisian restaurants with a large cheese under one arm, and the lid of our saucepan under the other, to be used, according to the doctor's recommendation, as a dish!

But the difference between Mr Erman and other travellers on the character and position of the various classes into which the population is divided, cannot be ascribed to the revolutions of time. The dislike he supposes the Russians to have to intimate association with foreigners—the segregation of the women of the upper ranks—and the social position of the priesthood—are all mistakes which he has fallen into in consequence, no doubt, of the brevity of his sojourn, and the pre-occupation of his mind by other studies. The comparative isolation of the foreign mercantile class at St Petersburg is owing partly, no doubt, to the prejudices of the Russian gentry; but prejudices of a different kind from what Mr Erman supposes. It is the profession they dislike, and that alone—a fact which is proved by the very same barrier existing between them and their own merchants. The masses of the people have no avenue to the government service (the grand distinction of rank in Russia) but through the army. Trade, however successful, neither ennobles nor dignifies; and the wealthiest merchant may continue throughout his life a serf, paying his master an annual rent for his liberty to buy and sell. This explains the original isolation of the English factory, as it used to be called—an isolation kept up to this day by English prejudices as well as Russian. Our countrymen never mix thoroughly with the population anywhere. In the towns of France, Germany, and Italy, they are very nearly as distinct a class as they are in St Petersburg.

In Moscow, the foreign residents are chiefly teachers, and their intercourse with their employers is on a much more easy and equal footing than at home. But foreigners, who are neither merchants nor teachers, amalgamate as completely with Russian as with any other society; and more completely if English, because the heartiness of hyperborean hospitality breaks through the national reserve, and compels them to feel at home.

The kind of segregation of the women of the upper classes mentioned by our traveller exists to a less extent in Russia than in England. In the former country, not taking morning calls into account, which are comparatively rare, the reign of sociality commences at three o'clock—the general dinner hour; from which time till late at night all is flutter and freedom among the womankind. After dinner the company separate, but only to meet again, either in the same or some other house or houses, and the whole evening is spent in a succession of festive reunions. But on the other hand, the women of the mercantile class live in a kind of Eastern seclusion, drinking tea from morning till night, of which they imbibe, it is said, not less than from forty to fifty cups in the day. But the secrets of their prison-house are unknown, for the antagonism of classes is as strong on their side as on the other; and a noble would find it as difficult to join the domestic circle of a merchant, as a merchant would to seat himself at the table of a noble. The women, however, go to church, and on some occasions to the promenade, when their beauty, with which Mr Erman was so much struck, appears very remarkable indeed—as a work of art. The man of science was too much of a true philosopher to question so agreeable an illusion. He only saw the most exquisite complexions it is possible to conceive, and took it for granted that they were formed of nature's own red and white. Among the peasantry, again, there is more separation between the sexes (not seclusion), oddly conjoined with more intermixture, than perhaps in any other country. Custom does not prevent the women from bathing in the same pond with the men; but it generally prevents them from mixing in the dances or other recreations. You will see on the highways, near the villages, a group of bearded peasants dancing together with the utmost gravity, and at a few yards' distance a group of women similarly engaged,

\* *Travels in Siberia, &c.* By Adolph Erman. 2 vols. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans. 1848.



neither party bestowing even a look upon the performances of the other. While mentioning the peasantry, we may as well say that it is not brandy, as it is called throughout the work, that is the common spirit of the country, but *votki*, a liquor distilled from grain, and somewhat resembling, both in taste and weakness, the gin of the Londoners.

With regard to the churchmen, our traveller tells us that they do not form so distinct a group of the population as the other classes; the higher clergy intermixing with the nobles, and the lower with the tradesmen. This is quite a mistake. The higher clergy are monks of St Basil, sworn to perpetual bachelorhood, and they do not go into lay society at all. They confine themselves to their convents, where they live well, and wax portly, and (belonging by birth to the upper classes) are indeed the most gentlemanly-looking men in Russia. The lower classes, on the contrary, are part and parcel of the people. They must be married before they are ordained, and they are ineligible to the higher offices of the church. Though their functions are sacred, they and their families belong to the vulgar; and we have seen these clergymen, in their canonicals, go into the *votki* shops of Moscow, and reissue while depositing gravely in their pockets a bottle of their favourite liquor. The religious feelings of the better class must have much decreased since Mr Erman's visit, since he tells us that a custom prevailed among them, which is rarely seen now, of offering adoration before meals to a crucifix set up in the room. The word *crucifix* we presume to be a mistranslation, for the Russians hold graven images in as much abhorrence as the Jews, paying their devotions instead before painted and gilded portraits of the saints.

The 'cautious reserve of the natives,' their 'shrinking from contact with a foreigner,' and their 'repugnance towards everything foreign,' are not merely unknown among the Russians of the higher class, but they are the very reverse of the fact. There is, in truth, throughout this order of society, to use the words of a more recent traveller, 'a sickly craving after everything foreign, and an unmanly affectation of scorn for everything native.' But while protesting against the book before us being received as high authority in anything but practical science, we would by no means be understood as being blind to the real merits of our author. Even leaving science out of the question, he is obviously an intelligent and accomplished man; he has a taste for the picturesque, and with good descriptive power; and, above all things, he has a sympathy with human nature even in its rudest condition, which throws a charm over the whole work.

In a work of such various and extensive information, the choice of subjects for notice is a difficult task; but we think we can hardly go wrong in devoting some little space to what many will deem rather a curious exposition of the economical importance of the Ural Mountains. Here, it seems, there are 132,000 tons of iron produced every year, four-sevenths of which are destined for European Russia, two-sevenths for Asiatic Russia, and one-seventh for the states on the south-west. 'The iron,' says our author, 'thus dispersed from the Ural would, if collected into one mass, constitute a sphere of only forty-seven feet diameter; and, if we assume the ores raised at five times the quantity of iron produced, we shall see that the diminution of the beds of the Ural will not exceed the contents of a sphere of 380 feet diameter in one hundred years. The result of this calculation will, as usual, only furnish another instance of the insignificance of human operations; for a globe of this size would not quite equal the dimensions of the *Blagodat*, as far as the ores are exposed above ground; so that many centuries must pass away before it will be necessary to go beyond the metallic accumulations which present themselves to view.' About the same value of gold and platinum is produced every year, and about one-fifth of the value of copper; giving of these metals the annual

amount of nearly five millions and a half sterling. To this must be added the produce of salt springs, rising through artificial borings carried into the lowest bed of the mountain limestone.

The magnitude of this branch of industry will be still better appreciated from our author's statement, that it would require 361 vessels of 400 tons each for the transport of a like quantity of minerals by sea. Here, with the exception of a comparatively small portion, it is distributed throughout the empire by means of river navigation, extending from Slatoust to the Baltic, or in an uninterrupted line of about 3350 miles. During 1000 miles of this route the boats have to struggle against rapid currents; and after all, they are prevented by the cataracts of Bronitau from retracing their route, and on reaching the Baltic, are broken up as firewood for the denizens of St Petersburg.

The vessels used in this remarkable voyage are 120 feet long and 25 broad, flat-bottomed, with nearly parallel sides, and triangular though not sharp, both at bow and stern. Each fleet is attended by two pilot boats, and each of the larger vessels by a punt; all these vessels being constructed by the miners themselves during the winter. By the 20th of April the ice has disappeared from the rivers, and on that day the fleet, led, with flag flying, by a commodore vessel containing the owner or supercargo, leaves Slatoust; but not before a solemn mass is celebrated on the deck of the commodore, and the vessel blessed by the priest. Mounted attendants are stationed along the banks, receiving orders from the commodore, and salutes are fired as the residences of the Bashkir chiefs are passed. At night the fleet brings to, and the crew, all of whom are miners, sleep on shore, on almost every occasion surrounded by different scenery—now a narrow valley hemmed in by wooded hills, now an open plain, and again a gorge of bare calcareous rocks, sometimes rent into enormous columns, and sometimes hollowed out into caverns. At Satka an addition to the cargo is made from the magazines there, and the complement of men increased in proportion, to work the heavy oars at bow and stern. Nor is the work easy, for all sorts of difficulties beset the navigation, sometimes impeded by shoals and banks, sometimes by rocks and islands. But the light-hearted boatmen sing their way through all, knowing that they will be recompensed at night by the enjoyment of sitting round their watch-fires, drinking the sap of the birch, collected from notches cut in the trees, and playing their *balalaika*, or native guitar. These men, however, do not voyage far. The crew is diminished in number as the navigation becomes easier; and at Ufa the whole of the miners are sent home, and the vessels manned by hired *Votyaks*.

At Laishef a radical change takes place in the voyage; for here the vessels bound for Nijnei or St Petersburg must prepare to quit the smaller rivers, along which they had hitherto threaded their way, and to commit themselves to the broad waters of the Volga, the nursing mother, as it is called, of the Russian empire. They are now therefore rigged and fitted with a railing round the deck, each having a crew of thirty men, which gives employment altogether to 20,000 of the inhabitants of the neighbouring country. The ascent of the Volga is not facilitated by tracking with cattle. All is done by means of human labour, and the boats warped along by a windlass and hawser. At St Petersburg, as we have said, their history closes.

But this is not the sole trade the Russians carry on from the confines of Europe and Asia. In one direction they barter the goods of the western world with the Chinese; in another they collect the furs of the frozen regions of the north; and in a third they exchange productions with Western Asia. The last-mentioned trade is carried on chiefly with Bokhara; and some readers will wonder in what possible way a commercial character can attach to a barbarian state, without industry or resources, and a mere oasis in a desert of sand; and why 15,000 loaded camels should wend thither every year in

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caravans from the surrounding countries of Asia. In a work published three years ago, Baron de Bode has solved this question, by pointing to the geographical situation of Bokhara as a central point of all the commercial routes between Eastern and Western Asia, and through which the chief products of that quarter of the world must be sent to Europe.\* It is likewise the natural depot of the southern countries, whose merchandise is sent to the north; and almost from the gates of its capital city the steppes begin which stretch to the Russian frontier. This remarkable oasis, together with that of Khiva, was formerly, according to the Greek and Asiatic historians, in a much more flourishing state than now; and in a memoir communicated by Humboldt to a German officer, the author of a work on Khiva, the writer speculates on the gradual desecation (often referred to by other inquirers) of this part of Central Asia as one of the causes of the change.†

The present trade is described by Mr Erman at Troitsk, one of its Russian depôts, bordering upon the steppe of the free Kirgis. 'On the Kirgis side of the bazaar,' he says, 'may be seen, in worn-out and ludicrously-patched garments, the men riding upon camels and horses, the women on saddled cows; and the piercing cries of the camels, which are obliged to kneel down to be unloaded, are heard continually. The men are chiefly employed in selling the horses which they bring here in immense droves, and which are kept partly in a palling within the hall, partly turned out to graze in the steppe. The women, seated on the ground on the felt mats of their tents (kibitki), carry on the retail trade, and reckon their money. The Bokharians, Tatars, and Bashkirs, are said to deal fairly and peaceably with their brethren in religion, the Kirgis, and to find amusement in their peculiar locosity. The contrast between the grave and circumspect demeanour of the Bokharian, sitting in his dark booth on the woiok cushion, waiting quietly for customers, and the savage boisterousness of the Kirgis, is said to be very striking. These more civilised merchants are even there always clad in the rich long khalat, while the greater number of the Kirgis go about in short jackets of horse-skin with the hair on, or in ragged cloths, and with the most clownish air.'

We now come to merchandise of a different kind. 'The conversation of a Kirgis belonging to our host, and who was a constant companion of our nocturnal trips in the sledge, contributed not a little to compensate us for our tedious disappointment while lingering in the lonely German churchyard. He told us how, when he was a lad of sixteen—and boding no good—he was enticed by his father from the steppe to the Siberian frontiers, and was there handed over to some Russian merchants in discharge of a debt of 180 roubles. He travelled with his new master to Tomsk, and being dismissed from thence, he entered immediately into the service of his present owner. The only tidings he had since received from his own home were, that his unnatural father had met with the punishment due to perfidy, being killed by some Russians with whom he had quarrelled. Perhaps, for the sake of the appearance of revenging himself on fate, the otherwise good-natured man related, with rare glee, how he, too, had renounced the children whom he had reared at Tobolsk from his marriage, and had given them into servitude to other Russians. Among the inhabitants of the steppes, the trade in the human being is ever a favourite business. Cases, however, like the present, which display an unnatural want of feeling in parents, are of rarer occurrence. Sometimes the eldest son, on the death of the father, gets rid in this way of his sisters, the support of whom devolves on him; the kidnapping of children is generally the work of families at variance, who thus take revenge on one another. The Kirgis, who are so numerous in ser-

vice in Western Siberia, and those in Bokhara and the other Khanates, have been all carried off in this way. Those Kirgis, in particular, who attend the merchants of Bokhara through the steppes, have quite a passion for kidnapping their neighbours' children; and it is said that, in consequence, whenever a caravan in the steppe passes through an Aul, or inhabited place, the mothers, with the anxious bustle of cackling hens, drive their children together into a felt tent, or kibitka, and there guard them from their itinerant fellow-countrymen. The Russians, it may be supposed, who fall into the hands of these wretches are not on a bed of roses. 'Our Kirgis friend declared to me that he knew nothing of the custom, attested to me previously, and by most credible witnesses, as existing in the little horde, of knocking Russian prisoners dexterously on the head in such a way as to blunt their intellects, and so render them less capable of effecting their escape. But on the other hand, he described, as an eye-witness, a cruel practice, usual in his own tribe, and having the same object in view. When they have caught a Russian, and wish to retain him in servitude, they cut a deep flesh wound in the sole of his foot, towards the heel, and insert some horse hair in it. There is then no doubt that, even when the wound is externally healed, he will abide for the rest of his life, by a leading rule of Kirgis national manners; for as the Kirgis is always on horseback from choice, so the maimed Russian becomes a confirmed equestrian from the pain of walking.'

The Siberians themselves are described by our author as an enterprising and industrious race, bearing not a few of the characteristics of the New Englanders. As for the exiles, or convicts, as we should call them, they appear to be very well off, passing among the kindly Russians by the name of the Unfortunates. 'All these Unfortunates, as they are called, live in the town in perfect freedom; and with the exception of some newly-arrived exiles, who are obliged to do penance in church, they seem quite exempt from any special control or watchfulness on the part of the police. Many of the older ones do the same thing of their own accord, and doubtless from sincere conviction. These aged exiles pass over from the luxury of Moscow to the frugal simplicity of Tobolsk with true manly equanimity. They let their beards and hair grow; and, as they say themselves, they find the life of the Kosak and the peasant far more supportable than they once believed. Hence it is easily conceivable that the children, whom they bring up from marriages with Siberian women, totally lose all trace of so remarkable a change of fortune; and that the Russian nobility employed in Siberia in agriculture, hunting, or any other *promuissal*, are as little to be distinguished from their neighbours as the posterity of Tatar princes.' The exiles of the better classes are officers who have been guilty of fraud or breach of trust; while those convicted of state offences are sent nearer the Icy Sea.

In pursuing his journey northward from Tobolsk, our traveller found the comfort of the people greatly dependent upon their wives, who not only kept their houses clean and in good order, but were themselves distinguished by healthy and pleasant looks, neatness of dress, and hospitality. Near the arctic circle, the town of Beresov was found steeped in that 'half-dark day' which, according to a Russian poet, has a magical charm for every nation of the north. A plain of snow and ice extended beyond, till it met the line of the horizon; the silence of the desert reigned in the twilight streets; and but for the smoke from the chimneys, the travellers might have fancied themselves in some city of the dead. 'It would be a great mistake, however, to judge of the interior of the snow-covered houses from the dreary and inanimate appearance of the streets; for instead of finding the people sunk in their winter sleep, one sees them full of hilarity and vigour, and willing to enjoy life. In conformity with the ancient Russian usage, the duty of entertaining the strangers was not allowed to fall on a

\* Bokhara, its Amir, and its People. From the Russian of Khanikoff.

† Memoir of the Countries about the Caspian and Aral Seas.

single family; but during a residence of five days in the place, I was continually moving as a guest from house to house. In the course of each day, the wandering social circle, as I may call it, kept continually increasing, my hosts of the preceding days always joining it, until at last the *posienki*, or evening sittings of the men, consumed not a little of the long winter's night. One might spend years in this conversational life without wishing for anything better; for the weighty experience of many generations is here accumulated into a rich treasure, and the men who have collected, and who impart it, seem gifted in no ordinary degree. Nowhere else did I find among the natives so lively an interest in the objects of our journey; and it is entirely owing to the circumstance that many here had been instinctively led to meditate on philosophical questions, that, besides the geographical and magnetical observations, I obtained at Beresov much valuable information respecting the peculiarities of the climate, as well as the men and animals inhabiting the country around.

This would seem indeed a traveller's tale to one ignorant of the circumstances which combine to give so intellectual a character to a remote and isolated community almost buried in snow. But the blood of the Beresovians is mingled with the best in the empire; and the flower of the court and army—exiled generals and statesmen—have united with their Ostyak wives to raise a progeny distinguished at once by refinement and vigour. Then they are not always alone; for travellers from Tobolsk come frequently to give a fillip to their faculties with news of the busy world; and Russian crews—wild men of the Icy Sea—make their way sometimes to Beresov, and pay for their winter quarters with stories of their adventurous lives.

Such is life in the far north; but our space warns us that we must conclude, at least for the present. As yet, we have only got through the first volume; and the second is full of interesting details of life among the Ostyaks, and of the intercourse of the Russians with the Chinese. On the latter subject we shall have an opportunity of comparing the observations of our author with those of Müller, Pallas, and other writers; and from such sources we shall hope to be able to lay before our readers a sketch both useful and entertaining.

#### 'THE MERCIFUL' ESCAPE.'

AMONG the vestiges of former times remaining in the town of Dundee, is a wynd, or rather court, leading from the High Street, and known in native parlance as 'the Voults.' It is so called from being supposed to pass over extensive vaults belonging to an ancient monastery, whose site is no longer discernible; and the popular belief is in some degree confirmed by the hollow reverberations which its pavement gives back to passing steps or vehicles.

Time and fires have considerably diminished their numbers, especially of late years; but it is evident that the Voults was once as densely inhabited as city wynds were wont to be in the days of our ancestors; and those antiquated mansions, that look as if they had seen and never forgotten the devastating troops of Montrose, were occupied by the local rank and fashion of two hundred years ago. Since then, they have experienced the usual gradations of inhabitants, from anxious business down to reckless poverty. As the Voults is a kind of thoroughfare between two principal streets, some remnants of the former are still observable; but so late as the commencement of the present century, it was one of the busiest and most important localities in the burgh. At that time, which happens to be the period of our story, the lower flats in some of the cellars were appropriated to shops and offices, whilst the upper afforded habitations to operatives of every description, including the handloom weavers of linen cloth, which branch of industry was then new among the manufactures of Dundee.

The men of the loom in that neighbourhood were an industrious, intelligent class, though reckoned somewhat curious, and inclined to gossip; but there was no better specimen of these united characteristics in the order to which he belonged than James Wotherpoon the widower, who, with his only son and loom, abode for more than forty years in an attic room of Scrymgeour's Land opposite the Hostel. Both these buildings are long ago numbered among the things that have been, but they were conspicuous at the period of which we speak. The former was a tall timber house of five storeys, with an outside stair and balcony, said to have been erected by a branch of the once powerful family of Scrymgeour before the Reformation, but in its last days inhabited by the poorer class of artisans; and the latter, a lower but larger and more solid stone fabric, traditionally reported to have served the different purposes of a chapter-house, a mansion of the Lindsay family, and an inn kept by a Flemish refugee, when there was no other inn in Scotland.

From the last-mentioned circumstance was derived the name which it retained through many a change of service, till at length, when the first French Revolution gave the news-reading world an impetus such as it never knew before, nor ever wanted since, the proprietor of a weekly paper, in high repute among local politicians, found more than sufficient accommodation for his establishment in the Hostel. A queer old place it was, with narrow windows, wainscotted rooms, and supernumerary doors in every corner, leading to winding passages and stairs, as if modes of egress and entrance had been the only study of the builders; but some of them were permanently locked up, and some forgotten, through the disuse of years. The people engaged about the 'Saturday Express' were thoroughly acquainted with the ways of their old-fashioned office, and it was believed the editor rather liked their intricacies, as they afforded no encouragement to the visits of strangers.

Whether owing to that cause or not, the office was rarely visited; but to one of the opposite neighbours at least it was an object of ceaseless interest and admiration, and that was James Wotherpoon. James was deservedly looked up to by the humble circle of his acquaintances, on account of superior attainments in the two great topics of their mental world—politics and theology; none could give a fuller account of the Sunday's sermon, or more clearly interpret a newspaper paragraph; he was acquainted with every popular work on divinity that had been published north of the Tweed for the last two centuries; could estimate the abilities and orthodoxy of every preacher between Tay and Don, and knew the political bias of all the notables of his time, from Pitt to the author of the 'Rights of Man.' Nor was his knowledge of those matters so surprising as it appeared to his simple companions, considering that the only hours of his waking existence which he spent off the loom were devoted to what he called 'studying the divines,' on which earnest pursuit a walk of ten miles to borrow an unread volume, or hear a celebrated preacher, was in his esteem as nothing; and the only coin he could or would spare, besides the purchase of life's daily necessities, was expended in subscribing for the Saturday Express, which he read every week, from the title to the last advertisement, at the rate of so many columns per day, to the great edification of his son and enlightenment of his neighbours, most of whom were content to receive the news of the day second-hand, and with explanatory notes by either of the pair.

A closely-resembling pair they were that father and son; and the Voults, in general, graphically expressed their sense of the only visible distinction by styling the one Big, and the other Wee Jamie, as their Christian names happened to be the same. Big Jamie was forty, and Wee Jamie was fourteen; but in size alone they were dissimilar; both were thin, muscular, and somewhat withered, with grave but curious faces, on which hard work, harder thought, and spare living, appeared



legibly written. In church each sat with the same reverent though watchful attention; in the streets each had the same cautious but rapid walk; and in the attic, where the one plied the shuttle, and the other wound the pirns or bobbins which supplied the woof, each wrought with the same air of determined and tireless industry. In modes of expression, shakings of head, and elevation of brows, the father and son were complete imitations of each other. The boy was a model of the man even in the matters of theology and politics; and a more regular, praiseworthy, but singular pair could not be found among the proverbially well-instructed artisans of their country. But there was one yearning which troubled the quiet of the Wotherspoons' days, like the repinings of Rasselas in the Happy Valley. The Saturday Express was their oracle—it was a Whig, and so were the two Jamies; they had read it with faith and understanding, week after week, from the first number, but they had never seen the interior of the printing-office. 'It's the temple o' science!' old Wotherspoon would exclaim, as he cast an adoring look from the attic window on the smoking chimney of the Hostel—the temple o' science, an' I may say the high place o' knowledge, from whence its glorious light is dispersed on all the nation. No but that there's mony mair o' sic fortresses built again' ignorance in Glasgow and Edinburgh, ne'er speakin' o' Lun'on an' the distant capitals o' Europe; but it fears me there's few papers filled wi' truth an' sincerity like the Saturday Express; an' to think that that mighty engine the Press is doin' its work for unborn generations at the tither side o' the Voults, an' us ne'er saw the powers o' printin' in actual operation!'

'Mr Moodie's gay ill-willie to let in strangers,' responded his son to one of these outbursts. 'Sic folks shouldna be in places o' power an' trust; but Hirsalin' Jock, the devil, telt me, in the speerit o' confidence, for clearing up to him how his majesty George III. had gaen clean wud, that his temper's amazingly mollified sin the plunderin' o' Loretto; an' we might hae a chance to see the work in a' its glory, if we wud jist step in some Saturday forenoon an' comport oursel's discreetly.'

'We'll try it, Jamie; we'll try it,' said his father with an emphasis that indicated resolution. 'Mr Moodie can do nae waur than refuse.'

It may be requisite to remark that Mr Moodie was the gentleman in command at the Hostel, whose partiality for the absence of visitors has been already noted; but after a long and minute discussion of the information imparted by Hirsalin' Jock—such being the Voults' sobriquet of a boy in the establishment—it was at length arranged between the greater and smaller Jamie that a bold attempt to see 'the dispenser of knowledge,' as the former styled the press, should be made on the following Saturday.

It was Wednesday when they came to this high resolve, and many a determined but anxious look was cast towards the Hostel from that till the appointed day: none of their neighbours were informed of the project—the Wotherspoons were too prudent for that, as they knew that failure was possible; but Jock had been waylaid, and catechised by the junior partner touching the possibilities of success in case such an enterprise were attempted, at some indefinite time; and his replies being satisfactory, the father and son rose from their loom at an unusually early hour on Saturday, equipped themselves as much in Sunday fashion as they considered advisable on a week-day, and proceeded to put their design in execution.

The Hostel was their goal; but by way of avoiding observation, and giving their courage time to rise, they trotted the whole length of the Voults and sundry adjoining streets, till at last, making a final sweep, they entered the mystic precincts in the train of a running newsman. Keeping close behind him, the Jamies passed through a long wide gallery, a couple of empty rooms, and a flight of stairs with a door at the top, which ad-

mitted them to a large dusty apartment, where the broad and now wet sheets lay in piles, beside which several men and boys were at work, some folding, others putting on the covers, a pair of clerks were writing at a table in the centre, and a red-faced gentleman, loudly exhorting to haste, was pacing up and down when they made their appearance.

It was near the hour of issuing the paper, and all engaged on the Saturday Express were that day unusually hurried: the arrangements of newspaper offices were not then so perfect as at present; some delay had occurred in the transmission of intelligence, the compositors had blundered beyond correction in the leading article; and Mr Moodie, his official duties done, but still in the temper evoked by these trials, turned his eye on the elder Wotherspoon as he stood wondering at the scene, and demanded, 'What's your business?'

'My son an' me,' said Jamie, bowing reverently in the presence of literature, but still true to his resolution, 'jist cam in to see the glorious mystery o' printin'!'

'There's no time to let you see it now,' interrupted the editor. 'The hour of publication is almost past, and we are trying to get out a supplement.'

'Weel, I'm sorry,' responded Wotherspoon. 'I hae been a subscriber an' constant reader for a year and three-quarters.'

'Ah, indeed!' said Mr Moodie, manifestly softening. 'Well, just have the goodness to return in an hour or two, and you'll see it quite comfortably. Good-morning, sir.'

'Good-morning, and mony thanks,' said Jamie, stepping, as he believed, to the door of entrance, which closed behind him and his son the next moment with a bang; and they hurried down the steps, determined to wait the leisure of the press in some of the rooms below. But both thought the staircase wonderfully darker than when they ascended.

'It's lang to get doon; an' guid guide us, there's nae room here,' said the boy, as they reached the last step, and found themselves at the entrance of a narrow and dingy passage.

'I doubt we're aff the gaet. They say the auld place is fu' o' holes and bores. But we'll no gang back to yon ill-grained craytor till the time's up. There's surely some door to be got?' said his father.

With this comfortable hope they entered the passage. It was long, and dimly lighted by small slit-like windows near the roof, which were thickly covered with cobwebs; and, as old Wotherspoon remarked, 'nane of the place was owre clean.' But it grew darker towards the end; and pressing forward with a kind of desperate fear, both felt, for they could not see, that their further progress was opposed by a strong and fast-shut door. The father seized the handle, and attempted to turn it with all his strength; but it would not move.

'Deil a bit o' us can get out,' said he, planting his feet more firmly on the floor, to give greater force to his second effort; but a cry of terror and amazement burst at once from father and son as the boards beneath them suddenly gave way, and both were precipitated fathoms deep into the darkness below. Fortunately the surface they reached was damp earth, and the boy's fall was broken by alighting on his father's breast.

'Guid be praised there's nane o' yer banes broken!' was the first exclamation of poor Wotherspoon, as his son, recovering from the first shock, scrambled up. 'But whar in a' the worl' are we?'

It was a most natural inquiry under the circumstances. They were in utter darkness; but by that keen perception which necessity sometimes calls forth in extraordinary situations, they soon discovered that the dull damp atmosphere which surrounded them was that of a wide and silent cavern or cellar, for whose bounds they sought in vain. Hand in hand the father and son groped and stumbled on, in hopes of meeting with either door or steps; but nothing could they reach but the damp earthen floor, with here and there a loose stone, a fragment of crumbling wood, varied with old bottles and

pieces of broken pottery. All fear of Mr Moodie and his subordinates was by this time swallowed up in greater terror. They raised their voices, and called for help with all their might; but the hollow and prolonged echoes that followed their shouts had something in them so overpoweringly fearful, that they were soon terrified into silence.

'Lord have mercy on us!' said the father. 'Jamie, dear, I doot there's nae earthly help for us. Do ye ken whar we are?'

'In the heart o' the auld monks' vaults, faither,' said Jamie. 'Listen, yon's the street above us; and the pair could now hear a rumbling sound overhead, like broken and distant thunder.

'Well, if it's the Lord's will there will be a way of escape for us: let us pray to him,' said the father. And scarcely had he uttered this pious sentiment, when a faint gleam of light appeared in the distance, but only sufficient to give a dim idea of the vast extent around them.

'There must be some outlet, some chink there,' cried Wotherspoon; and his son uttered a cry of joy, which became dreadful in its echoes. 'Lord grant we may win tillt,' continued the old man, and both pressed on. Feeble as the light was—in fact the merest glimmer—it served as a sort of beacon for their sight, now in some degree accustomed to the darkness; but suddenly Jamie felt his father plunge forward, and at the same moment grapple at him with both his arms. The weight dragged him down, and the boy felt himself literally stretched on the ground, the extremities of his body resting on firm earth, and the middle portion grasped by the arms of his father over a deep circular chasm, in which the old man hung suspended.

'It's a well, Jamie!' cried the old man, flinging out his feet on all sides in search of some resting-place, no matter how small; but in vain. The mouth of the pit through which he had fallen was evidently covered with a large flag, having an orifice of something less than three feet in diameter in the middle. This the boy ascertained with his hands, which were still free; and a dripping sound far below, as of dust shaken down by their exertions, falling in deep water, proved too plainly that Wotherspoon's first idea was correct, and that he hung suspended over a deep old well.

'If I let you go, Jamie, do you think ye could fin' your ain way to the light, lad? Do you see it still?'

The boy replied with a shout of such wild and horror-stricken intreaty for his father to hold on, that the vaults replied as if with a hundred voices.

'Weel, Jamie,' said the father, when the fearful sounds died away, 'I canna hand lang; but the Lord might help us yet; and both earnestly invoked that Providence on which the last hope of human nature hangs under all forms of faith and fortune.

'I see whar the light comes fra: it's in at a chink aboon a great stone pillar just beside us,' cried Jamie, interrupting a petition; 'an' here's a hole in it you could run a stick up just at my very fingers. Loosh! but it's like the speaker's pipe in the wall o' Ramsay's Land.'

'Squeal up it, Jamie—squeal up it!' vociferated his father; and with an exhortation to keep a guid grip, the boy writhed himself round so as to reach the orifice, and hawled with all his strength, 'Help! help! my faither's droonin'!

'What's that?' cried the editor's clerk, who still remained in the business room with a couple of pressmen, winding up the last of the week's work, and rather anxious to get finished, as again and again from under his desk came a shrill whistling cry of 'Help! help! my faither's droonin'!

'It maun be the deil,' said the oldest of the men, making a stride towards the door. The clerk sprang to his feet and seized the desk, which was fortunately movable; the other man lent his assistance; but the voice still sounded on, and the clerk saw the paper, which happened to be loose on the wall, vibrate with

the sound. He tore it off in an instant, and discovered plainly the small circular opening of a speaking-tube in the lath and plaster, from which the cry proceeded.

'That weaver and his son haven't come back yet,' said the clerk, as an indefinite idea of the unused doors and the places to which they might lead, crossed him.

'No yet?' said the elder pressman, letting go the handle of the door. 'Do ye ken, air,' he continued, pointing to one situated almost behind it, 'whar that leads? A' I'm a leevin' man they went out of it; but Mr Moodie was sae awfu', I ne'er mintit to speak.'

'Then God help them, they have got into the old cellar, or maybe the vaults!' said the clerk; 'and how will we find them? Run and tell Mr Moodie, or the police. Hollo! where are you?' he shouted down the tube.

Never did a sound, of all the news they had heard in the course of their mortal existence, impart such joy to the hearts of the two Jamies as that brief inquiry. The father uttered a pious thanksgiving, and the son replied, 'Hingin' owre a well, and near the droonin', in the heart o' the auld monks' vaults!'

'Hold on, then, as long as you can,' responded the clerk, 'for there's help coming.'

Jamie uttered an earnest exhortation to all sorts of hurry, but none replied: the clerk had gone after his two assistants to alarm the neighbourhood. In a short time the more public parts of the Hostel were filled with the surrounding population, some with lights, some with ladders, and others with various weapons to break through walls and doors. The news had spread like wildfire 'that Big and Wee Jamie were smotherin' in the Vaults; and the general esteem in which the Wotherspoons were held, was evinced by the eagerness of their neighbours for their assistance. But the most efficient help was that of the pressman already mentioned, who pointed out the door by which the pair had made their exit. The staircase and the passage beyond were speedily explored, and the light of some dozen lamps and torches cast on a wide trap-door, which still yawned above a broken and long disused ladder. More certain means of descent were soon procured, and a considerable party went down into what was supposed to be an old wine cellar, divided from the great vaults by old partition walls, which in many places had fallen away, leaving what seemed a boundless extent of 'darkness visible.' The lights reached Jamie's eye first, and the shouts of him and his father guided the searchers to where the former lay literally across the mouth of an ancient draw-well, supposed to be as old as the Hostel itself, and more than a hundred feet in depth; whilst the latter, with his arms tightly clasped round his son, hung suspended within a few feet of the water, which was afterwards found to occupy more than half its depth, having accumulated there, it was supposed, for centuries.

By means of ropes and willing hands, the pair were extricated from their perilous situation, and Jamie the younger pointed out the speaking-tube in the pillar, which had been the means of their deliverance. Why its opening was situated so near the ground, or what communications it was originally intended to convey, were mysteries which employed the speculations and surmises of the whole Vaults for some time; but the constructors had left no record, and the most ingenious conjectures were hazarded regarding the convenient proximity of the well to the wine barrels in the days of the good Fleming, from whose occupation the Hostel received its name: yet a complete solution was never obtained.

By special command of the proprietor, that unlucky door in the printing-office was finally nailed up; and after the tale of the Wotherspoons' mischances became public, Mr Moodie, to his entire satisfaction, was relieved of the visits of the curious. It was some days before James Wotherspoon and his son recovered from the exhaustion and injury consequent on that Saturday's adventure, but neither ever again returned to



'the temple of science.' It was even remarked in after-life that both entertained an unaccountable horror of printing-offices in general; and when such matters were mentioned, the father was wont to observe, with a long and deep inspiration, 'The press! on ay, it's a mighty engine o' knowledge; but we had a mercifu' escape.'

#### PRE-CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND.

THE superiority of Ireland in the cultivation of antiquities is gratifyingly shown in a small and unpretending, but intelligent and accurate, volume recently published.\* While modestly taking rank as a guide-book, it is, in reality, the production of an elegant and highly-informed mind, from which the most original contributions to our knowledge might be expected. By its plan, moreover, it makes up for the narrowness of its dimensions. The kinds of antiquities are classed; the finest examples of each kind described, with beautifully-executed illustrations in wood; and thus, in a couple of hours, we rise with not only a good general idea of the aspect of Ireland as a field of antiquarian research, but some knowledge of almost every very remarkable object of the kind which it contains.

Ireland and Scotland are both rich in relics of the early heathen population. But the antiquarian spirit has scarcely yet awakened on our side of the Channel. We only know enough to see that a great similarity prevails among those antiquities of the two countries which relate to pre-Christian times. Mr Wakeman's first chapter refers to *cromlechs*, which abound in Ireland, as they also do in Scotland. 'A cromlech, when perfect, consists of three or more stones, unhewn, and generally so placed as to form a small enclosure. Over these a large stone is laid; the whole forming a kind of rude chamber.' 'From the fact of sepulchral urns containing portions of calcined bones, and in some instances of entire human skeletons, having been discovered in connection with several, these monuments appear to have been sepulchres.' Similar structures 'exist in many parts of the world, even in the heart of India.' Appearing as the first and rudest form of the sarcophagus, it would be difficult to assign them too remote an antiquity. Such, probably, were the lonely tombs to which distracted people betook themselves, as described in Scripture. The common idea regarding them in Scotland is, that they were sacrificial altars of the Druids.

Pillar stones, called in the native language *Leaganna*, are common in Ireland as with us, being usually tall rough blocks standing alone in fields or moorlands. Mr Wakeman does not decide whether they are idol-stones, or monuments of events, or landmarks, all of which characters have been assigned to them. In Scotland they are regarded as memorials of chiefs who have fallen in battle. We can mention a particular worthy of note, which we observed many years ago, regarding two such stones, placed at the distance of a few hundred yards from each other in a moor near Dingwall in Ross-shire—namely, that they stood in a line due east and west. There is one preserved in Trinity College, Dublin, with an inscription in what is called the Ogham character—a voice of the far past, which no one can now interpret.

It affords some affecting considerations regarding Ireland, that amidst the struggles of its peculiar modern barbarism, the better spirits of the land may allowably rejoice in the vestiges of ancient, though it might be imperfect, civilisation, which show that it was something while yet England was nameless. To judge merely from the gold ornaments, necklaces, and bracelets, of not inelegant workmanship, which have been found in surprising abundance in the sister island, we might suppose its early people to have been no small way

advanced in the refinements of life. No one could read Mr Wakeman's account of the Newgrange Mound or Cairn, without retaining the impression that some great unchronicled history belongs to Ireland, as to some of the lands of the East, and to those of Central America. This mound, which lies four miles and a half from Drogheda, was opened in 1699, and found to contain a subterranean building of massive stones, accessible through a narrow passage. It is, in fact, a little hill, composed of a ruined edifice of a singular and primitive kind. A central chamber, on which the passage opens, is cruciform, and eighteen feet high; its sides and roof being composed of huge slabs, mostly covered with curious carving, representative rather of scrollwork than figures, and which evidently has been executed before the stones were put into their present situation. Two similar mounds, called the hills of Nowth and Dowth, exist near by; and in one of them, an internal chamber of much the same form and style of decoration has recently been discovered, containing many half-burnt bones of animals, some small shells, a pin of bronze, and two small iron knives. These curious structures, with their many decorations, are finely illustrated in Mr Wakeman's volume.

Many names of places in Ireland have Rath as their initial syllable; thus Rathdrum, Rathcormac, Rathfurling, &c. 'Rath' is a Celtic word for 'fort.' It abounds in Scotland also, but usually with a variety of pronunciation—*Rait* (though sometimes *Raith*). In our country, where this circumstance is not generally known, we have several times ventured, with regard to places having the syllable *Rait* in their names, to predict that ancient forts would be found near them—for example, *Rait* in the Carse of Gowrie, and *Logierait* at the junction of Tay and Tummel—and the result invariably justified us. Probably the well-known farewell cape at the north-west angle of Scotland has a fort on its summit, and should be called *Cape Rait*. Such forts are usually mere earthworks, forming a circle, or set of concentric circles, on plain ground, or cutting off the outer angle of a bank overhanging a rivulet. The enclosure is supposed to have contained temporary buildings for residence.

The celebrated Hill of Tara, in the county of Meath, is covered with a cluster of raths, and presents few other objects. From an indefinitely early time down to the sixth century it was a chief seat of the Irish kings. According to Mr Wakeman—'Shortly after the death of Dermot, the son of Fergus, in the year 563, the place was deserted, in consequence, as it is said, of a curse pronounced by St Ruadan, or Rodanus, of Locha, against that king and his palace. After thirteen centuries of ruin, the chief monuments for which the hill was at any time remarkable are distinctly to be traced. They consist for the most part of circular or oval enclosures and mounds, within or upon which the principal habitations of the ancient city undoubtedly stood. The rath called *Rath Righ*, or *Cathair Crofina*, appears anciently to have been the most important work upon the hill, but it is now nearly levelled with the ground. It is of an oval form, measures in length, from north to south, about 850 feet, and appears in part to have been constructed of stone. Within its enclosure are the ruins of the *Ferrada*, and of *Teach Cormac*, or the House of Cormac. The mound of the *Ferrada* is of considerable height, flat at the top, and encircled by two lines of earth, having a ditch between them. In its centre is a very remarkable pillar stone, which formerly stood upon, or rather by the side of, a small mound, lying within the enclosure of *Rath Righ*, and called *Dumha-na-n-Giall*, or the Mound of the Hostages, but which was removed to its present site to mark the grave of some men slain in an encounter with the king's troops during the rising of 1798. It has been suggested by Dr Petrie, that it is extremely probable that this monument is no other than the celebrated *Lia Fáil*, or Stone of Destiny, upon which, for many ages, the monarchs of Ireland were crowned, and which is generally sup-

\* The Hand-Book of Irish Antiquities. By William F. Wakeman. Dublin: James McGlashan. 1848.

posed to have been removed from Ireland to Scotland for the coronation of Fergus MacEark, a prince of the blood-royal of Ireland, there having been a prophecy that in whatever country this famous stone was preserved, a king of the Scotic race should reign.

'The *Teach Cormac*, lying to the south-east of the *Forradh*, with which it is joined by a common parapet, may be described as a double enclosure, the rings of which upon the western side become connected. Its diameter is about 140 feet.

'The ruins of *Teach Midhchuarta*, or the Banqueting-hall of Tara, occupying a position a little to the north-east of Rath Righ, consist of two parallel lines of earth, running in a direction nearly north and south, and divided at intervals by openings which indicate the position of the ancient doorways. These doorways appear to have been twelve in number (six on each side); but as the end walls, which are now nearly level with the ground, may have been pierced in a similar manner, it is uncertain whether this far-famed *Teach Midhchuarta* had anciently twelve or fourteen entrances. Its interior dimensions, 360 by 40 feet, indicate that it was not constructed for the accommodation of a few; and that the songs of the old Irish bards, descriptive of the royal feasts of Teamor, may not be the fictions that many people are very ready to suppose them. If, upon viewing the remains of this ancient seat of royalty, we feel disappointed, and even question the tales of its former magnificence, let us consider that, since the latest period during which the kings and chiefs of Ireland were wont here to assemble, thirteen centuries have elapsed, and our surprise will not be that so few indications of ancient grandeur are to be found, but that any vestige remains to point out its site.'

We did not intend to follow Mr Wakeman into the department of Christian Antiquities; but we are tempted out of our design by the Round Towers, which we believe have not been adverted to in this Journal since they ceased to be the mystery which they had been for many centuries. Our author does full justice to the profound learning and unwearied diligence by which Dr Petrie has at length made their purpose and history almost as clear as that of the churches with which they are invariably connected. The conclusions of that learned person are—1st, That the Towers are of Christian and ecclesiastical origin, and erected at various periods between the fifth and thirteenth centuries; 2d, That they were designed to answer at least a twofold use—namely, to serve as belfries, and as keeps or places of strength, in which the sacred utensils, books, relics, and other valuables were deposited, and into which the ecclesiastics to whom they belonged could retire for security in cases of sudden attack; 3d, That they were probably also used, when occasion required, as beacons and watch-towers.

For the one hundred and three Round Towers of Ireland, Scotland contains two—those of Abernethy and Brechin. The former is connected with a town well known to have been originally Pictish. The Picts, according to Mr William Skene's ingenious book, were the progenitors of the modern Highlanders, and therefore the same Celtic people with the Irish. All antique structures in Scotland are popularly referred to the Picts, particularly these towers, and a class of fort-like buildings in the north of Scotland, circular, half covered in with masonry, and composed of regular courses of stone well compacted, either by jointings or cement, these last being commonly called Picts' houses. It is as the relics of a Celtic civilisation that these things are chiefly interesting. In neither country do the same people, sunk as they are into a mere populace, though still retaining some fine traits, seem capable of such architectural efforts. Those who made towers and palaces then, make only hovels now. The days of torques, plates of gold, and elegant sepulchral urns, are long since gone by. A brutish multitude, feeding scantily on the meanest of food, is all that remains of a people who once filled Europe, and played in it a great

though unrecorded part. Strange destiny, which causes an old, and gallant, and ingenious race to fade and pine beneath the rule of a stranger, as if it had qualities which made it shine out masterfully while it stood upon its own resources, but in other circumstances fell all to retrogression!

#### M. LOUIS BLANC'S ORGANISATION OF LABOUR.

M. LOUIS BLANC, now a member of the Provisional Government of France, is a young literary man, who joined the republican party ten or twelve years ago, when that party seemed to be on the point of extinction. He is known in this country as the author of a 'History of France during the Ten Years 1830-40'; but not until the occurrence of the recent events in France did another work of his—a little volume on 'The Organisation of Labour,' which he published originally in 1839—attract general attention among English readers. Of a very sanguine disposition, precocious in talent, and full of certain general notions regarding the amelioration of the condition of the working-classes, which had been widely propagated in France by two Utopian thinkers, Saint-Simon and Fourier, M. Blanc had cast these notions into a shape capable, he thought, of instant application to the existing state of society. Golden and beautiful in appearance, but utterly repugnant to the plain sense of practical men, and, moreover, wholly defiant of the principles which Adam Smith was supposed to have established, the scheme of the young *littérateur* provoked replies from a few of the political economists of France, and especially from the distinguished M. Michel Chevalier. Chiming in, however, with prevalent popular sentiments, M. Louis Blanc's proposition survived these attacks; and a few months ago, when publishing a fifth and augmented edition of his former treatise, he appended a very striking prediction, to the effect that, Utopian as his views seemed, the time when they should be realised was less distant from the hour at which he wrote than was the revolution of 1789 from the eve which preceded it. This prediction has been fulfilled so far, that the views in question are now at least on their trial in France, and this under the auspices of M. Louis Blanc himself. In this experiment all nations are interested. From the methods in which it is conducted, from the crashes to which it may lead, from the total failure, if it should come to that, or from the partial and modified success, disappointing to the projectors themselves, whichever may be the issue, we, as spectators, may derive profit. Meanwhile, in order to be able to look on intelligently, it is essential that we should understand the precise nature of the scheme, and the precise hopes and feelings with which it is connected in the mind of its author.

The fundamental maxim upon which M. Blanc proceeds seems to be this: 'That wherever the certainty of being able to subsist by labour does not result from the very essence of the social institutions that are established, there iniquity reigns.' This maxim, it will be perceived, is equivalent to an assertion that the sufferings which afflict, and have always afflicted mankind, do not result from any inevitable necessity in the nature of things; but only from human perversity and misunderstanding—from the adoption and perpetration of false modes of government, and ineffectual social arrangements. Accordingly, the doctrine of the ephemeral nature of evil, and the perfectibility of human society, is expressly maintained by M. Louis Blanc. 'There are men,' he says, 'who do to God this outrage, to affirm that evil is immortal. Is this your thought? With such a doctrine, you go to the denial of all progress. For by what right do you affirm that it is only a third, or a fourth, or a fifth part of evil that it is given to man to destroy? By what right do you fix, on the road of progress, the limit which it is permitted us to reach, but not permitted us to pass? Do you believe

in progress—yes or no? In the first case, I defy you to assign its limits; in the second, I give up arguing with you. It is the custom to charge almost all our misfortunes on the corruption of human nature; we ought rather to accuse the deficiency of our social institutions. Look around you: what aptitudes displaced, and consequently depraved! What activities become turbulent, because they have not found their legitimate and natural outlet! Our passions are forced to act in an impure medium—they become changed: is there anything wonderful in that? If a healthy man is placed in a pestilential atmosphere, he will respire death. "Our nature," M. Guizot has said, "carries within itself an evil which escapes all the efforts of man. The disorder is in us. Suffering, unequally allotted, is part of the providential laws of our destiny." This, then, is the philosophy of our opponents! The fallacy which lurks in this swift and fluent reasoning of M. Louis Blanc, it is not difficult to discern. That there is a progress in human affairs, all history shows, and all thinking persons admit; that it is in the power of social institutions to accelerate this progress on the one hand, or retard it on the other, is a proposition which we take for granted in our daily gossip and grumbings, and a firm belief in which is at all times desirable; but that misery originates solely in misunderstanding, or mal-arrangement on the part of man, or that even under any conceivable form of society it shall cease to exist, is a mere chimera. "There is in man a liability to do wrong, knowing it to be wrong," is a fundamental fact, revealed to every individual by his own actions, and by those of other men; and in this fact alone—even if we reject the disheartening theory of Malthus, which asserts the existence of another constant drag upon all efforts at amelioration in the very constitution of the race, physiologically considered—there is sufficient strength to throw the advocates of absolute perfectibility back in their calculations. Nevertheless, this very sanguineness of some men in the effect of good social arrangements to abolish suffering, renders them most useful members of any community to which they may belong; and when publicists of ability, like M. Louis Blanc, come forward to point out social wrongs, and propose remedies, they deserve a hearing, even from those whose faith is more tempered with discretion.

A large portion of the sufferings of the human race have their origin in pecuniary destitution, or the fear of it. Could all the pangs, anxieties, sorrows, melancholies, &c. which at any given moment exist, diffused through the world's population, be collected, and, as it were, amassed into one sum-total, part of the mass would be reducible to the mere fact of the *uncertainty of subsistence*; while the rest would consist of ordinary bodily ill-health, and of those vague and miscellaneous maladies and miseries which constitute 'the mind diseased,' to which no one can minister. The relative proportions of these two parts it is impossible to determine; but in the thoughts of M. Louis Blanc it is evident that the former is the most bulky. To abolish all that portion of human misery which originates from want, or the uncertainty of subsistence—to secure, in short, that every human being who is born into the world, and who is willing to work, shall move in it freely and comfortably, so far as material means are concerned—this is an enterprise which he thinks not at all beyond the compass of existing social science, and he endeavours to demonstrate the fact in the volume before us. That once accomplished, however, he would probably attack even those miseries which originate in other causes than want or the uncertainty of subsistence—he would combat disease, for instance, with a larger sanitary science than has yet been dreamt of—and seek to abolish moral gloom by the methods and resources of a new art of education. Such at least were the aspirations of Fourier, of whom M. Louis Blanc may be regarded as virtually, although in a modified fashion, a disciple.

The great social evil of the age, M. Louis Blanc contends, is the system of competition, or, as he sometimes calls it, individualism, upon which all business is conducted—the system, namely, according to which every man engaged in any occupation tries, by his own private means and energies, to outwork and undersell his neighbour, so as to leave him behind in the market. Regarding this system of mercantile competition, he undertakes to prove—1st, That for the masses, it is a system of extermination; and 2d, That for the middle classes, it is a constant cause of impoverishment and ruin.

He opens with a case strongly represented. 'Is the poor man a member of society, or is he its enemy? Let us see. Everywhere around him he finds the soil occupied. Can he sow the earth on his own account? No; because the right of the previous occupant has become a right of property. Can he pluck the fruits which God causes to ripen in his path? No; because, equally with the soil, the fruits have been appropriated. Can he devote himself to the chase or to fishing? No; because this, too, constitutes a vested right. Can he draw water from a fountain enclosed in a field? No; because the proprietor of the field is, in virtue of the right of accession, proprietor of the fountain. Can he, dying of hunger and thirst, stretch forth his hand for the pity of his fellows? No; because there are laws against mendicancy. Can he, exhausted with fatigue, and in want of an asylum, lie down to sleep on the pavement? No; because there are laws against vagrancy. Can he, fleeing from this homicidal country, where everything is denied him, go to ask the means of subsistence far from the spot where he was born? No; because it is not permitted him to change his country, except on certain conditions, which he cannot fulfil. What, then, shall this unfortunate do? He will tell you, "I have arms, I have intelligence, I have strength, I have youth; take all these, and in return give me a little bread." This is what the labouring classes say at present. But here also you may reply to the poor wretch—"I have no work to give you." What, then, would you have him do? The answer is very simple: *assure work* to the poor. Even then you will have done little for justice, and the reign of fraternity will still be far off; but at least you will have averted frightful perils, and cut short revolt. Have you well considered? When a man who asks to live by serving society is fatally reduced to a position in which he must attack it, on pain of dying, he is, in this state of apparent aggression, really in a state of legitimate defence; and the society which strikes him down does not judge him—it assassinates him. The question, then, is this—Is competition the means to *assure work* to the poor? To put the question thus is to answer it. What is competition as it respects the labourer? It is work set up to auction. A master has need of a workman: three present themselves. "How much do you ask?" "Three francs a-day: I have a wife and children." "Well, and you?" "Two francs and a half: I have no children, but I have a wife." "Very well, and you?" "Two francs will satisfy me: I am single." "Then you have the preference." Thus it happens, and so the bargain is made. What becomes of the two rejected workmen? They will let themselves die of hunger, it must be hoped.' Pursuing this strain, M. Louis Blanc traces to competition, as its cause, the misery of the working-classes of Paris, which he exemplifies in a table, exhibiting the rates of daily wages received by persons employed in the various trades of that capital. Amongst thirty-eight female occupations, the highest wages are 11s. a-week, the lowest under 3s. Of the trades followed by men, which are about twice as numerous as those open to women, those in which the largest wages are earned are the carpenters, slaters, and plumbers, who make 4½ francs a-day (upwards of a guinea a-week), but are idle four months of the year; and the glass-blowers and brassfounders, who make 4½ francs a-day (a little more



than a pound a-week), but are idle three months of the year. Those in which the rate of wages is lowest are the pork-butchers and the hairdressers, who earn, the former a franc a-day (5s. a-week), with board, during about eight months of the year; the latter 85 centimes a-day (upwards of 4s. a-week), with partial board and lodging, during the whole year. 'What tears,' says M. Louis Blanc, referring to these tables of wages, does each of these figures represent! What cries of anguish, what stifled curses! Behold in this the condition of the people of Paris—the city of science, the city of the arts, the glittering capital of the civilised world! In other French towns, he says, the state of things is even worse. At Nantes, for instance, the total yearly income of an average family of the poorer labouring classes is estimated, by an authority from whom he quotes, at only 300 francs (L.12). Of this sum, 25 francs (L.1) are paid away in rent, 12 francs (about 10s.) for washing, 35 francs (L.1, 8s.) for fuel, 12 francs (10s.) for shoes, and 5 francs (4s.) for repairs and removal. Deducting these, and some other expenses, and supposing medical attendance and drugs to be afforded gratis, and the clothes worn to be given in charity, there remain but 196 francs (about L.8) to purchase a year's food for four or five persons, who would require at least, stinting themselves to the utmost, 150 francs for bread alone. Thus there are only 46 francs (not L.2) left to purchase salt, butter, greens, and potatoes, not to speak of meat, which they never use.' All this, M. Louis Blanc contends, originates in the false and remorseless system of mercantile competition.

If the system of competition is thus the cause of misery among the poor, it is no less, says M. Blanc, a source of mischief and ruin to the middle classes. 'Good bargains'—such is the word in which, according to the economists of the school of Smith and Say, all the advantages of competition are summed up. But why persist in considering the results of good bargains otherwise than relatively to the momentary profit of the consumer? Good bargains do not profit those who consume, otherwise than by throwing among those who produce the germs of the most ruinous anarchy. Good bargains are the bludgeon with which the rich producers knock down those who are less easy in their circumstances. Good bargains are the pit into which hardy speculators cause laborious men to fall. Good bargains are the death-warrant to the manufacturer who cannot make the advances on a costly machine which his richer rivals are able to make. Good bargains are, in one word, the destruction of the middle classes for the benefit of a few industrial oligarchs.' As the most notable example that the world has seen of the effects of the system of mercantile competition, M. Blanc cites England. 'To produce, ever to produce, and by all means to solicit other nations as consumers of her goods, this is the work on which England employs her force; it is by this that she makes her wealth, by this that she develops the genius of her sons.'

'A day,' he adds, 'could not but arrive when the nations consuming her goods would find no more material to give in exchange; from which the result for England would be glutted markets, the ruin of numerous manufactures, the misery of crowds of workmen, and a universal upsetting of credit.' That this day has already nearly come, M. Louis Blanc goes on, in his hasty way, to prove by a few sweeping allusions to the condition of England, both material and moral. In every case of British bankruptcy he sees the providential punishment of the crime of mercantile competition. Nay, our sombre character and cast of countenance is but a moral chastisement for the same national offence. 'The riches,' he says, 'of these great English lords leave them a prey to I know not what vague melancholy; a malady sent by God upon the great of the earth, whereby they also may be made to succumb to pain; pain, that imposing and terrible lesson of equality! What do they actually possess, in the midst of their luxuries, these haughty lords? Bitter thoughts and eternal

restlessness of heart! They must fly the mists of their own idle to scatter their gold again in all the places whence it was drained, and there to drag about with them the burden of their wearying opulence.'

Having, as he thinks, exhibited the evils of the competitive system, M. Louis Blanc proceeds to expound his method of social reform. This consists in the application to all trades and occupations of the co-operative principle, or the principle of partnership. Of this principle most of our readers are doubtless aware M. Blanc is by no means the original advocate. First vigorously expounded and enforced in France by the celebrated Fourier about thirty years ago, it has since been a theme of disquisition for various writers both in our own country and on the continent; and in a previous number of this Journal, we were able to give an account, the fullest that has yet been presented to the English public, of an interesting experiment in which the principle in question was put in practice on a small scale, and for purely private ends, by an enterprising Parisian tradesman.\*

The peculiarity of M. Louis Blanc's views consists in the important part which he wishes to assign to the state in the conduct of all national industry according to the new or co-operative method. His ideas, however, will be best understood from the following summary of them in his own words:—'Government should be considered as the supreme regulator of production, and invested as such with the necessary powers. Her task would consist in employing the weapon of competition in order to destroy competition. Government should raise a loan, and employ the product of it in the creation of social workshops in the most important branches of the national industry. As this creation would require considerable funds, the number of workshops should at first be limited; by virtue of their very organisation, however, they would possess an expansive power. Government being considered as the sole founder of the social workshops, would have the right to draw up the rules and regulations. There would be admitted to labour in the social workshops, so far as the capital subscribed would go to purchase tools, &c. all such workmen as could give guarantees of good conduct. Notwithstanding that the false and anti-social education given to the present generation renders it difficult to find any other stimulus to exertion than in an increase of reward, the salaries of all the workmen would be equal, as a totally new education would necessarily change ideas and habits. For the first year government would regulate the hierarchy of functions—that is, appoint the foremen, &c. After the first year it would no longer be so. The workmen having had time to appreciate each other, and all being equally interested in the success of the association, the hierarchy would proceed on the elective principle. Every year there would be rendered an account of the net profits, of which there would be a triple division—one part to be shared equally among the members of the association; another to be expended, 1st, in the maintenance of the aged, the sick, the infirm; and 2d, in the mitigation of crises befalling other trades—different trades owing each other this good service; and the 3d, to go to purchase tools for such new members as wished to join the association. Into each association famed for great trades might be admitted persons belonging to trades which must, by their very nature, be scattered and confined to spots. In this way each social workshop would come to consist of different professions grouped round some great leading trade, as separate parts of one whole, obeying the same laws, and sharing in the same advantages. Each member of the social workshop would have the right to dispose of his income as he thought fit; but the evident economy and undeniable superiority of the barrack life would soon lead to an association in wants and enjoyments, as well as in labours. Capitalists would be invited to join the association, and would draw the

\* M. Leclaire of Paris. Journal, new series, No. 91.

interest of what capital they chose to invest; but they should not partake of the profits, except in the capacity of workmen.'

By introducing such a system in any country, first into a few of the principal branches of industry, and then gradually into all, M. Blanc believes that a social revolution would be effected most admirable in its results. Distress and want would disappear—all classes of society would be bound together by new and beautiful ties—and a progress would be made in science, in the arts, and in morality, of which as yet we can form no conception. With these views, it may be supposed with what alacrity he entered on the post which he now occupies, and in which he finds himself at liberty, under certain restrictions, to attempt in practice the novelties which, nine years ago, he projected in theory. State workshops are now on trial in France.

What may be the result of this experiment, and how far its failure would affect the soundness of the general principle of co-operation in industry, of which Louis Blanc's scheme is but one somewhat *bizarre* modification, we need not here consider; nor—our object having been rather to expound M. Blanc's views than to criticise them—need we enumerate those points in which they seem to run counter to the established principles of economical science, and the laws of human nature. An extract, however, from a review of M. Blanc's work by his most distinguished opponent, M. Michel Chevalier—himself a man of large and philanthropic views—will serve to suggest to the reader wherein the special weakness of M. Blanc's scheme lies. 'The mother-ideas of M. Louis Blanc,' says M. Chevalier, 'which appear every moment in his book, are these two—1st, Human societies may govern themselves principally, if not absolutely, by the sentiment of duty. Personal interest is only a resource of secondary importance; social and individual progress, the development of public and private prosperity, do not require that this sentiment of personal interest be called energetically into play. It is not necessary to excite it directly; an indirect allurements will suffice. Hence M. Louis Blanc concludes that his state workshops will flourish, since the members of the workshop shall have only a collective, and not an individual interest—an indirect, and not an immediate interest, in acquitting themselves well. 2d, The definitive term of societies is absolute equality. We already touch this goal; one more effort, and we are at it. Consequently, at a period close at hand, all men may be paid equally. Now these two mother-ideas are radically erroneous. Every social system founded on them is chimerical. Human nature is adverse to the conception of M. Louis Blanc. "So much the worse for human nature," he may tell me. It may be so; but so much the worse at least for your plan! Take men as they are, not as you wish they were. In the mind of the great majority of men, and in the greatest number of circumstances, the sentiment of personal right is superior to that of duty; the thought of interest dominates over that of sacrifice. The immediate and direct desire of individual advantage is a force incessantly acting; suppress it, and industry languishes. Without this, no more progress in the arts, no more ardour among workmen. Law and religion preach to men duty, and glorify self-sacrifice; and we owe them gratitude for this. Society would be lost were the sentiment of duty extinct. It would fall into rottenness if self-sacrifice and self-denial were not honoured among men. But the sentiment of right preaches itself; on this point each of us is his own clergyman, and finds in himself a docile pupil. It is only the chosen few that are otherwise constituted. Raise statues to Cincinnatus, offer palms to the martyrs; but do not hope that in practical life, and in questions of daily bread, the human race will take their self-denial for a model. Nay, even they themselves, in ordinary transactions, acted on the common principle. Again, to interpret the idea of equality, so as to make it mean identical remuneration for all men, is to misunderstand man and history. True equality—that

which our fathers proclaimed in 1799—consists in effacing the political inequalities founded on the right of birth. National education ought to have for its object to seek out everywhere, in hamlets as well as in cities, in the thatched cottage as well as under the roof of the wealthy, the superior natures of which society has need, in order that affairs may be well conducted. But the proposal to submit to the same material existence all men without exception, supreme magistrates as well as the most humble operatives, is one of those chimeras which are hardly permitted to the schoolboy, whose imagination dreams of Spartan black broth the moment that, having quitted the confectioner's shop, he is no longer hungry. This were not equality—it were the most brutal inequality, the most odious tyranny. Imagine in one of those barracks where the labourers—that is to say, all the citizens—are to lead the common life which M. Louis Blanc offers them; the prince or chief magistrate of the state, the cabinet ministers, the chief judges, the masters of trades, eating in the common mess-room the universal pittance, relaxing from their high cares in the common barrack-yard, and at the same games as the herd, meditating on the destinies of their country, and the general interests of society in their numbered apartments, having around them, by way of inspiration, kitchen utensils and squalling babies.' M. Louis Blanc, who has replied to these arguments of M. Chevalier, complains that they do not fairly represent his case. We shall perhaps return to the subject, when an opportunity may be afforded of considering how far this is true.

#### FARMER TREMAIN.

THE incident related in the following slight sketch is characteristic of the peculiar people and interesting district of the 'far west' of England, where I resided for two years, domiciled in a solitary cottage, beautifully situated on the slope of a deep valley.

I was sitting in the embrasure of a bay-window, which commanded a lovely prospect of hill and vale, wood and water, with a peep of the town and its church spire in the distance, when the sound of many human voices, chanting a solemn hymn, broke on the silence of the still summer afternoon.

The voices arose from the opposite side of the valley, where I beheld a cavalcade of men, women, and children, some in carts, some on horseback, but mostly on foot, reaching from the bridge to about midway up the winding ascent. At that point the road widened a little, and there was a large flat stone, covered with moss and lichens, around which a crowd had collected, the men with their hats off, the women in various attitudes of devotion, but all joining earnestly in the sacred service.

It was a funeral procession; and after a more lengthened sojourn in that peaceful valley, I found the ceremony one of constant recurrence; the winding road before named leading to the burial-ground of the widely-extended parish, and the flat stone on the hill-side being the usual resting-place for the weary bearers with their coffined load. On the present occasion, I found that some curious circumstances attending the death of the deceased, had rendered the 'wake,' as it was called, a spectacle of more than usual interest in the country side.

Farmer Tremain, for fifty years, had lived on the small but flourishing patrimony, with its substantial homestead, which had descended to him from his fathers; he was a popular and jovial personage, much respected by his neighbours, who consulted him on all occasions of emergency. He had never travelled twenty miles beyond his native farm, so that his sagacity was

homespun, and his knowledge of human nature must have been pretty nearly intuitive. He had a prudent wife and goodly children, and was contented and happy; till, on an evil day, he was tempted by a speculative proprietor to take a share in the deserted mine of Wheal Rose—a mine which had been abandoned on account of water gaining ground, and the produce not equalling the outlay required; but which some wise heads, and Farmer Tremain's into the bargain, determined to patronise once more, in the mysterious belief (for they could not explain the *why*) that an undiscovered lode of rich ore lay concealed beneath. It was indeed whispered abroad that Farmer Tremain had recourse to the forked branch of hazel, which, on being loosely held in the hand of the searcher, points downwards wherever ore is beneath the earth's surface; thus indicating the exact spot where the hidden treasure is to be found.

Farmer Tremain was a prudent man, and he took care not to involve himself very deeply; but the mine was fourteen miles away from his dwelling, and he harassed himself, and rode backwards and forwards on his good horse Dobbin in all weathers: he superintended the few miners set to work, and overlooked the accounts, in the shed dignified by the name of 'counting-house'; and continually got wet through, as the subtle mist gathered over the dreary hills, and, unlike legitimate down-pouring rain, renders all usual protection unavailing. Dobbin was a steady-paced, slow beast, though he had been known, once or twice during a course of years, to take extraordinary freaks into his Roman-nosed head, on occasions of sudden alarm, when he set off like a mad creature.

It was on a dark howling winter's night that Farmer Tremain mounted his sturdy horse, and gladly turned from Wheal Rose on his homeward route. A heavy mist had been falling all day, and the clouds were driving across the sky, scarcely permitting the moon at rare intervals to peep forth. The wayfarer on those lonely barren hills could not see a yard before him; and perchance he thought of his comfortable home and blazing hearth—of his kind comely dame and his rosy daughters—and wished to be among them, instead of where he was, with so long, cold, and cheerless a ride before him. Perchance, too, he wished that he had never been induced to engage in the turmoil and anxiety of mining speculation, but had been contented with his humble lot and hard-worked-for gains.

However this may be, he jogged forwards, perhaps about five miles on his way, when suddenly Dobbin stood still, began to snort in an unusual key, and positively refused to move another step; on the contrary, backed in such a determined manner, that neither coaxing, exhortation, nor whipping succeeded in changing his obstinate resolution. What was to be done? It was very strange, for Dobbin never took such whims into his head for nothing. So Farmer Tremain dismounted, and endeavoured to lead him: but he tugged and tugged in vain—Dobbin planted his forefeet firmly, and remained immovable. As the farmer was struggling with the refractory animal, his foot struck against something which sounded hollow on the middle of the road; but it was so dark just then, that he could not discern what the obstacle was; so he stooped down to feel, and as he passed his hands over its length and breadth, his blood curdled—for it was a coffin. Farmer Tremain was a superstitious man, as are all his people; but he had strong nerves, and was not easily frightened or daunted: so he patted Dobbin's Roman nose, and spoke encouragingly to him, for the poor creature was shivering strangely. He then succeeded in striking a light, the materials for which he always carried about him; and with the help of the moon, which emerged from behind the dark clouds, and cast its partial light on the scene, he saw that it was a common black coffin, evidently made for a full-grown, large individual. After pausing a moment, he opened it: it was empty. 'I

will see ~~who~~ it be for though,' quoth Farmer Tremain bravely, as he with some difficulty traced the inscription on the ordinary plate, which ran thus—'John Tremain, aged fifty years.' His own name—his own age!

He gasped for a moment, and his eyes started in their sockets, glaring almost as wildly as did the horse, which, with protruding eyes, distended nostrils, and ears thrown back, exhibited every symptom of terror and abhorrence. Farmer Tremain's sensations were very odd; and he longed for a glass of brandy, as he remembered there was a wayside house of refreshment a little way further on to the right: so privately arranging in his own mind to call there, he began to work himself into a towering passion with Dobbin, who strenuously resisted all efforts to urge him across the dismal barrier. Yet his master could not muster up sufficient resolution to place it on one side, for it lay entirely across the narrow road, and the horse must leap over it.

Excited, angry, and not knowing very well what he did, Farmer Tremain, making a step of the coffin, bounded on his horse, exclaiming, 'Thee shalt taste the butt end, Maister Dobbin!' at the same time striking the animal with all his force repeated and violent blows on the head and shoulders with the heavy handle of his whip. In a moment afterwards the fearful obstacle was cleared, and Dobbin rushed recklessly forward, as he had never rushed before, and probably never did again.

But Dobbin reached Tremain farm alone, panting, bruised, and covered with blood and foam. His unfortunate master was found about three miles from home, where, on some granitic rocks by the roadside, he lay apparently dead. It was supposed that he had been dragged along for a considerable distance, after he was thrown by the panic-stricken horse, which at length stumbled, and rolled over him. Farmer Tremain recovered speech and recollection for a while, sufficiently to explain and comment on the 'warning' which he believed himself to have received; and also to lament his passion and ill-judged harshness towards the faithful steed which had borne him safely for so many years. But the 'warning' was explained to the sufferer ere he breathed his last; which sad event took place a few days after the accident occurred. It seems that the bearers of the coffin, which had been the cause of so much mischief, being slightly inebriated, had heedlessly left it on that lonely road, while they repaired to the nearest alehouse, little dreaming that any one would pass the unfrequented way at so late an hour. Had Farmer Tremain mastered his superstitious dread, kept his temper, and pushed the empty shell aside, his scared horse might have been led quietly past; and as he would in all probability have sought the same refuge as these men, for the same 'consolation,' the whole would have been satisfactorily explained. The coincidence of the name was by no means singular, it being a common one in that part of the country: the coffin was intended for a labourer just deceased, whose solitary hut was within a mile or two of the spot, and whose age happened to correspond with that of his namesake.

Such was the recital I listened to, and it was the crowded wake of Farmer Tremain which I had witnessed; but the singular circumstances attending his melancholy end were not so easily disposed of by the wonder-seeking peasantry. To reason or to argue was robbing them of a pleasant error, and of an added legend to the general stock; and on that balmy summer afternoon, when I first heard the hymn chanted over the dead, on the hillside of our peaceful valley, I am sure that the eyes of the assembled throng traced the inscription of 'John Tremain, aged fifty years,' on the coffin-plate with sensations of unusual awe and undefinable apprehension. I remember thinking at the time that here was another proof, if proof were needed, of the baneful effect of superstitious fear acting on an unlettered mind; and that it involved an impressive

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lecture respecting patience and kindly treatment towards dumb creatures, and the evil of giving way to the impulse of passion.

### PERUGINO.

'THE life of Piètro Vanucci, commonly known by the name of Perugino, proves,' says an Italian author, 'that poverty does not always act as a check on genius.' He was born of indigent parents at Citta-Della-Piève in Italy, A.D. 1446. His early days were passed in want and suffering: nevertheless, it appears that his friends found means to bind him apprentice to a humble painter in the town of Perugia. This man possessed no extraordinary talent, but he held the art of painting in the highest veneration, and delighted in boasting to his pupil of the wealth and fame to be gained by it when properly exercised. 'Tis true he did not speak from personal experience, for he was miserably poor; but this he imputed to his not being one of fortune's favourites. His words produced a visible effect on the mind of the young Piètro, who listened with sparkling eye and glowing cheek.

'And I too,' he would exclaim, interrupting his master, while his face lighted up with hope and enthusiasm—'I will be a great painter! I will gain fortune and fame!'

If he met with any one who had travelled, his first question was, 'In what country are the best artists to be found?'

This question he also frequently put to his master, who always replied, 'In Florence; for there men are excited to exertion by three things—poverty, criticism, and the insatiable thirst for perfection which that celebrated city inspires.'

Piètro Vanucci, whom we shall henceforth call Perugino (a name which he afterwards took at Peronte, on being honoured with the freedom of that city), hastened to Florence to breathe the atmosphere which he conceived to be impregnated with art, and capable of inspiring and exalting its lowliest votary. But at what a price was he compelled to purchase this inspiration! When he arrived at Florence, he possessed nothing—absolutely and literally nothing; his clothes hung on him in rags, and for several months his bed was an empty chest with a little straw! During this time he suffered all the tortures of hunger, and every kind of misery. But what matter! he had the will to succeed—that persevering and powerful will which overcomes all difficulties, and which the Creator has bestowed on man, to be exercised for his own good and that of his fellow-creatures.

Perugino laboured incessantly day and night: painting was his only occupation, his only pleasure. Before him stalked continually the hideous phantoms—want and misery; and to escape them, he flew to his palette and his pencil: then a more pleasing picture smiled on him—that of prosperity and fame, which, in anticipation, he already enjoyed; and to secure the realisation of which, he braved fatigue, cold, and hunger. His favourite maxim was, that cloudy weather must sooner or later be succeeded by sunshine, and during the bright days of summer, a shelter should be provided against the inclemency of winter. Courage and exertion like his deserved to succeed; and they did so. In a few years he became known as a young artist of uncommon merit; his paintings were to be met with not only in Florence and throughout Italy, but in France, Spain, and almost every other country of Europe, making the fortune of those who bought and sold them as well as his own.

Perugino painted for the nuns of a convent in Italy a 'Dead Christ,' the colouring of which was exquisitely beautiful; and the landscape forming the background of the picture was much admired, though this particular feature in painting was not, in his time, brought to the state of perfection which it has since attained. The nuns were offered for this picture three times

the sum they had given for it, with an exact copy by the hand of Perugino himself; but they refused to part with it on any terms, as the artist owned to them that it might not be easy for him to produce another of equal beauty.

At another convent in Florence he painted the 'Nativity with the Magi' on the walls of the cloister, an undertaking in which he succeeded to admiration; and prompted by feelings of gratitude towards one of his masters, Andrea Del Verocchio, he introduced his head among those of the wise men that formed part of the picture. It was a common practice among the artists of Perugino's time to testify their respect for their masters by introducing their likenesses into what they considered their best paintings; and Perugino himself afterwards received an immortalising mark of gratitude of this kind from the divine Raphael, who, in one of his finest paintings, that of 'The School of Athens,' represented himself near Perugino in the character of his pupil.

The prior for whom Perugino painted the 'Nativity' was particularly clever in preparing the beautiful blue called ultramarine; and as he possessed a large quantity of it, he wished it to be used in every painting done for his convent; but being naturally of a suspicious temper, and fearful of losing even the smallest particle of it, he required that Perugino should use it in his presence only. The artist was hurt and offended at this ungenerous treatment, and determined to find a way of revenging himself, and conveying a lesson to his suspicious employer. Whenever he required the ultramarine, the prior, who stood over him like a sentinel, drew some from a little bag which he carried about his person, and put it into a phial, from which he never turned his eyes as long as Perugino was using it; but as soon as the artist had applied one or two touches to the wall on which he was painting, he dipped his brush into a goblet of water that stood near him, and more of the precious colour sank to the bottom of the glass than was used in the work. The prior seeing his bag emptied without much advantage to the painting, clasped his hands as he gazed at it, exclaiming from time to time in a tone of horror, 'Oh what an awful quantity of ultramarine does that limestone wall soak in!'

'You see with your own eyes,' replied Perugino coldly. But the prior had no sooner left the room, than the painter drained off the water, and removed the powder which had sunk to the bottom of the goblet, laying it carefully aside.

At length, when he thought he had sufficiently tantalised the prior, he went to him, carrying with him the precious colour, supposed to have been absorbed by the limestone wall.

'Here, father,' said he, presenting it to him, 'this belongs to you, and I restore it to you. You see how easily I could cheat you were I inclined to do so. Let this teach you to give all men credit for honesty, until you have had reason to doubt them; for to treat a man as a rogue, is sometimes to make him one.'

Unhappily, Perugino himself, as he advanced in years, became a slave to the very vices which he despised so much in others—avarice and suspicion. Having amassed considerable wealth by his paintings, which were executed in different parts of Italy, he returned to Perouse, where he was loaded with honours: but these did not satisfy him. Money was his idol, and to obtain it and keep it seemed the grand business of his life. Even his most intimate friends were looked on with an eye of suspicion whenever his darling money was in question; and to such a length did he carry this unhappy failing, that he became, in his old age, the subject of scornful jests and epigrams. On one occasion, going from Perouse to Citta-Della-Piève, and carrying with him a large sum of money, which he could not prevail on himself to leave behind in safe keeping, he was waylaid and attacked by robbers, who stripped him of his treasure, leaving him half-dead with fright and chagrin for the loss of his money. This misfortune had such an effect on his

health and spirits, that he took to his bed, and refused all consolation. Although he was in possession of extensive property in houses, lands, and money, he set no bounds to his sorrow for the loss he had sustained; till at length his friends and numerous admirers, becoming alarmed for his life, took pity on him, and between them, made good the sum of which he had been robbed. The cause of uneasiness removed, Perugino soon recovered his health, and resumed his occupations; but avarice had taken entire possession of him; and to gratify his longings after gain, he was guilty of acts of meanness that admit of no palliation.

He who had once so ardently panted after fame, now sacrificed it for the sordid purpose of heaping up gold. His paintings were hurried over, and copied by his own hand for sale, to increase his gains.

We will not, however, longer dwell on the defects or infirmities of Perugino's old age, but cast the veil of pity over the close of his life, in consideration of the hardships and difficulties that marked its commencement. His history has furnished us with more than one good lesson: it has added another proof to the many already existing, that persevering industry is usually crowned with success; it has shown us that the very blessings we most eagerly desire may, through our own perversity, become scourges and torments; and lastly, it teaches us a lesson of deep humility, for while we read Perugino's reproof to the prior, we cannot but remember the warning, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.'

Perugino ranked high in his day both as a painter and an architect. What distinguished him particularly as a painter, was the grace of his heads, especially those of children and women; and his perspective in landscape was thought equal, if not superior, to that of any of his predecessors. In the Louvre at Paris are still to be seen five of Perugino's paintings; and Italy possesses many *chefs-d'œuvre* by this artist, though a number of his works have been spoiled or degraded. He died at the place of his birth, Città-Della-Piève, A.D. 1524, and his remains were consigned to the grave with the honours due to his genius.

#### MANUFACTURE OF INDIAN-RUBBER SHOES.

The man of the house returned from the forest about noon, bringing in nearly two gallons of milk, which he had been engaged since daylight in collecting from one hundred and twenty trees that had been tapped upon the previous morning. This quantity of milk he said would suffice for ten pairs of shoes, and when he himself attended to the trees, he could collect the same quantity every morning for several months. In making the shoes, two girls were the artistes, in a little thatched hut which had no opening but the door. From an inverted water-jar, the bottom of which had been broken out for the purpose, issued a column of dense white smoke, from the burning of a species of palm nut, and which so filled the hut, that we could scarcely see the inmates. The lasts used were of wood, exported from the United States, and were smeared with clay, to prevent adhesion. In the leg of each was a long stick, serving as a handle. The last was dipped into the milk, and immediately held over the smoke, which, without much discolouring, dried the surface at once. It was then re-dipped, and the process was repeated a dozen times, until the shoe was of sufficient thickness, care being taken to give a greater number of coatings to the bottom. The whole operation, from the smearing of the last to placing the finished shoe in the sun, required less than five minutes. The shoe was now of a slightly more yellowish hue than the liquid milk, but in the course of a few hours it became of a reddish-brown. After an exposure of twenty-four hours, it is figured as we see upon the imported shoes. This is done by the girls with small sticks of hard wood, or the needle-like spines of some of the palms. Stamping has been tried, but without success. The shoe is now cut from the last, and is ready for sale, bringing a price of from ten to twelve vintens or cents per pair. It is a long time before they assume the black hue. Brought to the city, they are assorted, the best being laid aside for exportation as shoes, the others as waste rubber.—*Edwards's Voyage up the Amazon.*

#### TRANSLATION OF THE GERMAN STUDENTS' SONG. 'GAUDEAMUS IGITUR.'

##### SUNG AT THE STUDENTS' FUNERALS.

LET us then be merry, boys, while our youth protects us;  
After youth so bright and cheery—  
After age's season dreary—  
Still the earth expects us.  
Where are those who walked the world in the days before us?  
To the realms above us go—  
Seek the gloomy shades below—  
Mystery still is o'er us.  
Quickly fled the past of life—quickly fades the present;  
Death strides quickly through the land,  
Strikes us with unsparing hand,  
Sparos nor peer nor peasant!  
Live the university! live the grave professors!  
Live each don of look sedate!  
Live each undergraduate!  
Free from all oppressors!  
Here's a health to every maid famed for wit and beauty!  
Here's to every wedded dame,  
Every one of spotless fame,  
True to home and duty!  
Here's unto our native land, and to those who sway it!  
Here's to all who spend their gold  
As Maccenas did of old,  
And on art outlay it!  
Perish all that cast a shade o'er our mirth and gladness!  
Perish all the devil's wiles!  
Every foe to youthful smiles!  
Every form of sadness! C. R.

#### SCOTTISH FAMINE SIXTY YEARS AGO.

A partial famine took place in Scotland in 1782, and the spring and summer of 1783 proved wet and stormy, and the prospect of the next winter was still more gloomy. The pressure now became extreme; government was applied to for a loan, on the security of assessments to be imposed upon the land; and Mr Dempster, then one of the most active and influential of the Scotch members, brought in a bill for an assessment of fourteen per cent. on rents. Government also made a small grant, which was intrusted to the sheriffs of counties for distribution among the kirk-sessions. Subscriptions were raised in the south of Scotland and in England; many Scotchmen, merchants in London and elsewhere, sent shiploads of provisions for the supply of the poor. Among these the house of Phyn and Ellice was conspicuous. The concluding of a general peace in 1783 set at liberty the stores collected for the navy, and these were placed at the disposal of the sheriffs, but only to be sold. Government also purchased provisions, and sent them down for sale at prime cost. Among other supplies, large quantities of bad white peas were sent down to the north, which were unpalatable even in that time of famine. The rule was, to give as little as possible; but what was sold by the kirk-sessions was to a great extent on credit. The harvest was as bad as was anticipated; in many instances the people at their stock of sheep and cattle, which in the winter it became impossible to feed. In some Highland parishes the population broke loose, and seized the cattle and sheep of their neighbours; but the instances of this were very few. In general, the patience of the people was great, and every one exerted himself in his own sphere to meet the evil. Their efforts were so far successful. All accounts agree in stating that not an individual died of absolute want during the long-continued famine, though many fell victims to the diseases which spring from insufficient food, or food of bad quality. The clergy record with just pride the efforts made by all classes, and the honesty of the people in repaying the advances of meal or money to the uttermost farthing. Some with difficulty could do this in seven or eight years, but the accounts agree that not a penny of the money but was paid at length. We know instances where gentlemen advanced meal and seed-corn to their poorer hill tenants; and not only was this all repaid, but for years afterwards, the tenants used to send presents of honey, mountain-berries, and other trifles in token of their gratitude.—*Quarterly Review for March.*

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